

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-11 L-03

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FM AMEMBASSY LONDON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3703
INFO AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN
AMEMBASSY DUBLIN
AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE
AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY ROME
AMCONSUL BELFAST
AMCONSUL EDINBURGH
AMCONSUL LIVERPOOL

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: UK, PINT

SUBJECT: HEATH'S TROUBLES CONTINUE

REF: LONDON'S 11462, 10914

SUMMARY. ALTHOUGH HEATH STANDS TO GAIN A CERTAIN AMOUNT
OF PRESTIGE AND FAVORABLE PUBLICITY FROM HIS TRIP TO US
AND MEETINGS WITH SECRETARY AND PRESIDENT, HIS POLITICAL
POSITION HAS BEEN FURTHER WEAKENED BY SHADOW MINISTER
RIPPON'S SPEECH LAST WEEK WHICH SEEMED TO ENDORSE PRIVATE
ARMIES. END SUMMARY.

1. TORY SHADOW SPOKESMAN ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS GEOFFREY
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RIPPON IN A SPEECH AT WHITEHAVEN, SEPTEMBER 7, STRESSED

"FREEDOM, LAW AND ORDER" AS MAIN THEME OF CONSERVATIVE POLICY. "AT A TIME WHEN FOUNDATIONS OF OUR SOCIETY ARE BEING SHAKEN BY VIOLENCE AND EXTREMISM," RIPPON SAID, "WE MUST TAKE STEPS TO ENSURE MAINTENANCE OF ORDER. A CONSERVATIVE GOVERNMENT MUST PROVIDE FOR AN ADEQUATE LEVEL OF RESERVES AND FOR THE STRENGTHENING OF THE TERRITORIALS, AND STRENGTHEN THE POLICE AND CREATE A CITIZEN'S VOLUNTARY RESERVE FOR HOME DEFENCE AND DUTIES IN AID OF THE CIVIL POWER...IF WE ARE NOT TO SINK INTO ANARCHY FOLLOWED BY DICTATORSHIP, ELECTORS MUST SEE THAT IN THE COMING GENERAL ELECTION THEY DO NOT AGAIN DUCK THE ISSUE: WHO GOVERNS BRITIAN? IS IT TO BE PARLIAMENT, OR THOSE WHO THINK THEY CAN DEFY ANY LAW THEY DON'T HAPPEN TO LIKE?"

2. ADVANCE COPIES OF HIS SPEECH HAD ALREADY CREATED SOMETHING OF A STIR, FORCING RIPPON TO ISSUE AN EXPLANATORY STATEMENT WHICH ATTEMPTED TO MAKE CLEAR THAT HE WAS NOT REALLY GOING BEYOND ALREADY PUBLIC TORY POLICY. HOWEVER, STATEMENT AND SPEECH TOGETHER HAVE BEEN WIDELY INTERPRETED BY PRESS AS INDICATIVE OF THE DISARRAY IN TORY PARTY, PARTICULARLY IN AFTERMATH OF JOSEPH TREATISE ON ECONOMICS (REF A). BOTH RIPPON AND JOSEPH WERE SPEAKING ON MATTERS OUTSIDE THEIR DESIGNATED AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITY AND BOTH SPEAKERS HAVE, AT MINIMUM, EMBARRASSED HEATH WHO HAS BEEN QUESTIONED PUBLICLY SEVERAL TIMES AS TO WHETHER TORY PARTY AGREED WITH WHAT THEY SAID.

3. TUC AND LABOR SPOKESMEN HAVE NOT PASSED UP THE OPPORTUNITY OF ATTACKING THE TORY SPOKESMEN: JOSEPH FOR ALLEGEDLY SUPPORTING HIGHER UNEMPLOYMENT AND RIPPON FOR THREATENING CREATION OF AN ANTI-STRIKE FORCE.
SOHM

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